

# What Works Clearinghouse



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## WWC Quick Review of the Report “The Impact of Two Professional Development Interventions on Early Reading Instruction and Achievement”†

### What is this study about?

This study examined the effect of the *Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)* professional development curriculum on the reading achievement of second graders.

The authors examined data on more than 5,000 second graders from ninety elementary schools in four states during the 2005–06 school year.

Study schools were randomly assigned to one of three groups: one in which teachers received training following the *LETRS* curriculum, another where they received the *LETRS* training as well as ongoing instructional coaching, and a third where the teachers received the standard professional development available in their district. Thirty schools were assigned to each research group.

The study measured effects by comparing the standardized reading test scores of students from each of the three groups of schools.

### What Professional Development Interventions Were Contrasted?

In two of the research groups, teachers received eight days of reading instruction training using the *Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)* curriculum.

*LETRS* training was offered in the summer and continued through the school year.

One of the two groups that received the *LETRS* training also received weekly one-on-one support from a specially trained instructional coach.

In the third research group, teachers received the district’s standard professional development program.

### What did the study authors report?

Providing second-grade teachers reading instruction training using the *LETRS* curriculum (with or without the instructional coaches) did not increase the reading test scores of their students.

The authors estimated effect sizes that ranged from 0.03 to 0.08. These estimates were not statistically significant.

#### WWC Rating

***The research described in this report is consistent with WWC evidence standards***

**Strengths:** The study is a well-implemented randomized controlled trial.

†“The Impact of Two Professional Development Interventions on Early Reading Instruction and Achievement” (NCEE 2008-4030). Michael S. Garet, Stephanie Cronen, Marian Eaton, Anja Kurki, Meredith Ludwig, Wehmah Jones, Kazuaki Uekawa, Audrey Falk, Howard Bloom, Fred Doolittle, Pei Zhu, and Laura Szteinberg. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, September 2008.

WWC quick reviews are based on the evidence published in the report cited and rely on effect sizes and significance levels as reported by study authors. WWC does not confirm study authors’ findings or contact authors for additional information about the study.

The WWC rating refers only to the results summarized above and not necessarily to all results presented in the study.